

Message Text

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ORIGIN CU-04

INFO OCT-01 EA-10 ISO-00 USIA-15 PA-02 PRS-01 /033 R

DRAFTED BY CU/EA:MZINOMAN:NN

APPROVED BY CU/EA:RNICHOLS

EA/PRCM - JTAYLOR (SUBST)

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P R 092051Z MAY 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMCONSUL HONG KONG PRIORITY

INFO USLO PEKING

UNCLAS STATE 108815

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: SCUL, CH

SUBJECT: AAU TRACK AND FIELD TEAM:ANNOUNCEMENT

REF: HONG KONG 5106

FOLLOWING ANNOUNCEMENT OF AAU TRACK AND FIELD TEAM'S TRIP
TO CHINA JOINTLY ISSUED ON MARCH 20 BY AAU AND
NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON US-CHINA RELATIONS:

"NEW YORK, MARCH 20 - IN RESPONSE TO AN INVITATION FROM THE
ALL-CHINA SPORTS FEDERATION, A UNITED STATES TRACK AND
FIELD TEAM WILL MAKE AN UNPRECEDENTED VISIT TO THE
PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA IN MAY. THE TOUR WILL BE UNDER
THE JOINT SPONSORSHIP OF THE AMATEUR ATHLETIC UNION OF
THE UNITED STATES AND THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON UNITED
STATES-CHINA RELATIONS.

THE PLANS FOR THE VISIT WERE DISCLOSED TODAY BY
ARTHUR H. ROSEN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE NATIONAL
COMMITTEE ON UNITED STATES-CHINA RELATIONS, AND OLLAN
C. CASSELL, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE AMATEUR ATHLETIC
UNION AT A NEWS CONFERENCE.

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THE AMERICANS WILL PARTICIPATE IN THREE MEETS WITH THE

CHINESE ATHLETES IN CANTON, SHANGHAI AND PEKING, WITH THE FIRST SCHEDULED FOR CANTON ON MAY 18. THE DATES FOR THE MEETS IN SHANGHAI AND PEKING HAVE NOT YET BEEN DETERMINED. THE AMERICANS, WHO WILL ARRIVE IN THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA ON MAY 15, WILL RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES ON MAY 30.

THE U.S. TEAM WILL CONSIST OF APPROXIMATELY 60 MEN AND WOMEN. CASSELL SAID THE METHOD OF SELECTION OF THE MEMBERS OF THE U.S. SQUAD WOULD BE ANNOUNCED SHORTLY. THE AMERICAN AND CHINESE ATHLETES WILL PARTICIPATE IN ALL OLYMPIC EVENTS EXCEPT THE MEN'S WALK, MARATHON AND DECATHLON AND THE WOMEN'S PENTHALON.

THE MEETS WILL BE INFORMAL AND UNOFFICIAL, WITH NO TEAM POINT SCORES MAINTAINED. "THEY WILL BE FRIENDLY COMPETITIONS," ROSEN SAID.

IN ANNOUNCING THE PLANS, ROSEN CONVEYED THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM CHARLES W. YOST, PRESIDENT OF THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON UNITED STATES-CHINA RELATIONS: "WE ARE PLEASED THAT THE ALL-CHINA SPORTS FEDERATION HAS ASKED THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE TO ARRANGE THIS VISIT. WE ARE CONFIDENT IT WILL DO MUCH TO PROMOTE FRIENDLY RELATIONS BETWEEN THE PEOPLES OF BOTH COUNTRIES AND FURTHER THE SPIRIT OF THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE."

CASSELL, IN TURN, READ THIS STATEMENT FROM JOSEPH R. SCALZO, PRESIDENT OF THE AMATEUR ATHLETIC UNION: "OUR AMERICAN ATHLETES HAVE SERVED AS GOOD-WILL AMBASSADORS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD AND WE MOST CORDIALLY ACCEPT THE INVITATION TO VISIT THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC AND ENGAGE IN FRIENDLY COMPETITION WITH THE CHINESE ATHLETES."

CASSELL NOTED THAT THE TRIP TO CHINA WILL BRING TO 32 THE NUMBER OF COUNTRIES THAT U.S. ATHLETES IN ELEVEN SPORTS WILL VISIT IN 1975 UNDER AUSPICES OF THE AMATEUR ATHLETIC UNION. THE A.A.U. IS THE GOVERNING BODY IN THIS COUNTRY FOR TWELVE AMATEUR SPORTS. EIGHT OF THESE, UNCLASSIFIED

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INCLUDING TRACK AND FIELD, ARE ON THE OLYMPIC PROGRAM.

THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON UNITED STATES-CHINA RELATIONS IS A PRIVATE NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION WHICH HAS FACILITATED CULTURAL, EDUCATIONAL AND ATHLETIC EXCHANGES WITH THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, BEGINNING WITH THE VISIT OF CHINA'S TABLE TENNIS TEAM TO THE UNITED STATES IN 1972." KISSINGER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PUBLIC DISCLOSURE, ATHLETIC PRESENTATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 09 MAY 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE108815
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: MZINOMAN:NN
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750163-1182
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750565/aaaacgxc.tel
Line Count: 115
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN CU
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 HONG KONG 5106
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: SmithRJ
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 SEP 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <29 SEP 2003 by buchantr>; APPROVED <16 JAN 2004 by SmithRJ>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AAU TRACK AND FIELD TEAM:ANNOUNCEMENT
TAGS: SCUL, CH, AAU
To: HONG KONG
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006